

Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)

Project Eligibility Assessment (PEA)

Corams Fields Community Outreach Initiative

Mary O'Shaughnessy – Safeguarding Specialist

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**Gas Network Vulnerability & Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)
Governance Document - Project Eligibility Criteria**

<p>Section 1 - Eligibility criteria for company specific projects (other than condemned essential gas appliance repair and replacement)</p> <p>In order to qualify as a VCMA project, a project must:</p>	
VCMA Eligibility Criteria	Criteria Satisfied (Yes/No)
a) Have a positive, or forecasted positive Social Return on Investment (SROI), including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA project;	Yes
b) Either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations, and relate to energy safeguarding, or ii. Provide awareness on the dangers of CO, or iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO; 	
c) Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these;	Yes
d) Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations; and	Yes
e) Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved or local) funding.	Yes
<p>Section 2 - Eligibility criteria for company specific essential gas appliance servicing, repair and replacement projects</p> <p>In order to qualify as a VCMA project, unsafe pipework and essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement must meet the following criteria:</p>	
a) A GDN has to isolate and condemn unsafe pipework or an essential gas appliance following a supply interruption or as part of its emergency service role;	N/A
b) The household cannot afford to service, repair or replace the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance; and;	N/A
c) Sufficient funding is not available from other sources (including national, devolved or local government funding) to fund the unsafe pipework or essential gas appliance servicing, repair or replacement.	N/A
<p>Section 3 - Eligibility criteria for collaborative VCMA projects</p> <p>In order to qualify as a collaborative VCMA project, a project must:</p>	
a) Meet the above company specific and boiler repair and replace (if applicable) project eligibility criteria;	N/A
b) Have the potential to benefit consumers on the participating networks; and	N/A
c) Involve two, or more, gas distribution companies.	N/A

**Gas Network Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)
Governance Document - Project Registration Table 2**

Information Required	Description
Project Title	Coram's Fields Community Outreach Initiative
Funding GDN(s)	Cadent
New / Updated (indicate as appropriate)	New
Role of GDN(s) *For Collaborative VCMA Projects only	N/A
Date of PEA Submission	01/04/2024
VCMA Project Contact Name, email and Number	Contact Name: Phil Burrows Role: Head of Customer Vulnerability & Social Programme Delivery Email: phil.m.burrows@Cadentgas.com Number: 07773 545451
Total Cost (£k)	Partner costs = £336,724.00 Printing cost = £2,000.00 4% project management costs = £13,548.96
Total VCMA Funding Required (£k)	£352,272.96
Problem(s)	<p>Coram's Field, a charity based in Bloomsbury has been established for over 80 years. Their work with young people focuses on several core services that run during term -time and school holidays:</p> <p>Under 5's Drop- In https://www.coramsfields.org/under-5s/</p> <p>In addition to the traditional childcare, their under 5s drop-in and nursery supports parents to develop friendships, reducing isolation whilst providing an array of additional support, guidance, and signposting to other services across the borough. Around 80% of their nursery families fall in the lowest income band, with over 50% accessing low-income subsidies.</p> <p>Based on their monitoring data for 2022, families who use their services can be categorised as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28% claim universal credit or rely on other benefits • 74% live in overcrowded accommodation • 41% English is a second language • 46% have more than one child • 25% are lone parents

- 12 – average number of families using the drop in each day

Out of School Club (4 – 12 years old):

The out of school club works with 40 children per day (term time) and 70 per day (holidays). 60% access free or subsidised spaces due to being on low incomes or having social work intervention or disabilities (learning and physical). General fees remain low, to ensure equality of access. Their OSC team also provides support and guidance to parents through various channels, such as regular and direct contact via dedicated email newsletters and face-to-face. The strong relationships cultivated with parents have established their team as a trusted resource.

Youth Programme:

The youth programme provides support for young people from 11-19 years. Its key focus is to provide a safe space for young people where they can access a whole range of support, provided by trained youth workers, employability, outreach, and clinical teams (in partnership with Camden and Islington NHS Trust). Last year alone, they supported 688 young people in their youth centre, where about 80% are vulnerable or at-risk.

Based on their monitoring data, the young people in the employability scheme can be categorised as follows:

- From low-income families: 100%
- Mental health issues: 85%.
- Criminal history and risk of offending: 75%
- Not in education, employment, or training (NEET): 39%
- Special needs: 25%
- Young carers: 25%
- Known to Social Care: 15%
- Attend PRU/Alternative Provision: 6%.
- Teenage parents: 3%

Sports Programme:

The Sports Programme delivers free sessions during term time and holidays, delivering both universally free services for local young people, and targeting support to young women, those with disabilities, young people at risk of crime/ASB and school exclusion. Their sports programme supports the physical and mental wellbeing of young people, the majority of whom are from low-income families. The programme also creates volunteering/ employment opportunities, through their young sports leader programme.

The programme works in partnership with a wealth of VCS partners to deliver its mission, creating an expansive network and reach into families beyond its own direct delivery.

	<p>Community Café:</p> <p>The community café acts as a key meeting point for families using their space. This is a community hub where we support initiatives around food poverty and community cohesion, such as delivering free school and holidays meals and providing home to a Little Library.</p> <p>The Camden Youth Safety Taskforce evaluation identified the importance of programmes which support young people and their families. It also recognised that securing employment was a gateway out of poverty.¹ Cadent's VCMA funding will allow Corams Fields to support the most vulnerable families whilst providing employment for young people within the community.</p>
<p>Scope and Objectives</p>	<p><u>Project Scope</u></p> <p>The project will provide individual one to one support to families and young people who are socially isolated and in need of advice regarding issues including energy efficiency, CO awareness, income maximisation and healthy eating. They will also promote the Priority Services Register (PSR) to those who are eligible.</p> <p><u>Project Objectives</u></p> <p>Coram's Fields' staff attract over 100,000 visitors to its parks over a year, in addition to those engaging via Great Ormond Street hospital and other residents' organisations. This is in addition to those attending the drop-in sessions or organised programmes at the centre.</p> <p>Coram's Field predicts this will result in direct support conversations, which the success of the project will be measured against, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Income maximisation advice – 2030 individuals • Efficient use of Appliances advice – 2030 individuals • Priority Services Register registrations- 304 individuals • Alleviate loneliness and isolation via conversations and in person events – 300 individuals
<p>Why the Project is Being Funded Through the VCMA</p>	<p>We believe that this project meets the required company specific VCMA project eligibility criteria.</p> <p>a. Have a positive, or a forecasted positive, Social Return on Investment (SROI) including for the gas consumers funding the VCMA Project:</p>

	<p>We believe this project has the deliverables necessary to create a positive social return on investment - see the below section for more details.</p> <p>b. Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Provide support to consumers in Vulnerable Situations and relate to energy safeguarding, or, ii. Provide awareness of the dangers of CO, or, iii. Reduce the risk of harm caused by CO; <p>This project will provide support to consumers in vulnerable situations and relate to energy safeguarding. Project customers will access financial advice and realise additional household income, both of which may result in a customer being able to adequately heat their home to a healthy temperature.</p> <p>c. Have defined outcomes and the associated actions to achieve these:</p> <p>This project has clearly defined outcomes and associated actions to achieve them. Further information on the project's outcomes and associated actions can be found in the relevant section below.</p> <p>d. Go beyond activities that are funded through other price control mechanism(s) or required through licence obligations;</p> <p>We believe that this project goes outside of activities funded through other price control mechanisms due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the types of support being delivered, and b) the method through which customers are to be engaged (e.g. not through Cadent's BAU activities) <p>e) Not be delivered through other external funding sources directly accessed by a GDN, including through other government (national, devolved, or local) funding.</p> <p>This project will solely be delivered by Cadent's VCMA funding.</p>
<p>Evidence of Stakeholder/Customer Support</p>	<p>The following data highlights there is a demand for this project. An out-of-work family with two children has less than half the income required to meet the cost of a minimum acceptable standard of living – this has fallen since 2016 when over 60 per cent of costs were covered.</p> <p>A lone parent on the minimum wage has a 24 per cent shortfall, while a couple both working full time on the minimum wage has an 8 per cent shortfall.</p>

	<p>A lone parent working full time on median wage still does not have enough to cover the costs, with a 13 per cent shortfall. Larger families have, on average, lost more from the cuts to social security since 2016, as they are disproportionately affected by policies such as the two-child limit and the benefit cap</p> <p>Recent policy announcements (uprating benefits by 6.7 per cent, unfreezing local housing allowance (LHA), the rollout of some free childcare for 9 month – 2-year-olds) will mean the shortfall should not increase any further next year (benefit capped households will fall further behind).²</p> <p>The Energy Diaries research – through extensive research with customers living in fuel poverty over a period of several months, we then engaged with experts such as Citizen’s Advice, NEA (National Energy Action) and a suite of other charities operating in this space to co-create several additional initiatives that Cadent could offer to its customers. This was one of these initiatives.</p> <p>Charity Partnerships – we have strategic level partnerships in place with around 40 consumer advice organisations and charities. We engage regularly to assess the benefits of existing projects and consider options elsewhere, taking the opportunity to benchmark against others and seek to learn.</p> <p>Centres for Warmth – the teams running the centres also fed into the development of this initiative, when considering the successes of the existing centre projects and opportunities for enhancements, based on the specific needs of the customers / households already being supported.</p> <p>Stakeholder feedback – Working with various Stakeholders we can understand the needs of customers living in vulnerable situations across our networks. Regular conversations and check ins with organisations such as Citizens Advice, National Energy Action, and Groundwork. These regular check ins allow us to gain feedback on the projects we are or should be supporting and ensuring that the projects are in the best interests of our customers. The guidance we are being given is consistently around supporting customers living in fuel poverty and especially considering the current energy crisis.</p>
<p>Information Required</p>	<p>Description</p>
<p>Outcomes, Associated Actions and Success Criteria</p>	<p><u>Project outcomes</u></p> <p>The project will provide support via its centre at Bloomsbury for those attending activities either via the nursery or via one of the youth groups. They have identified that around 80% of their nursery families fall in the lowest income band, with over 50% accessing low incomes subsidies. In addition, 71% live in</p>

² <https://cpag.org.uk/policy-and-research/findings-our-projects/cost-child-reports>

overcrowded accommodation with 41% speaking English as a second language. As the nursery staff have a relationship with the families, they will be encouraging them firstly to sign the Priority Services Register whilst also identifying what they are claiming the benefits they are entitled to. They will also be advising them on energy efficiency including safe use of appliances and making them aware of the importance of both having a co alarm and how to use it correctly.

Families who do not attend activities at the centre but have been identified as being in need will be visited in their homes by a detached family worker to identify their needs. This worker will have an understanding how to work with the family to gain the trust needed to support them.

All the young people who attend the centre are from low-income families with 80% deemed vulnerable or at risk. All young people will be provided with energy efficiency and CO awareness. For those who are in independent living or responsible for family finances, they will be offered income maximisation support including support with applying for benefits and managing debt. In addition, they will also be supported whilst still in education or seeking employment. The centre has strong links with businesses in the community which they will be using to secure suitable opportunities for the young people. They will support them with CV writing, interview preparation and direct support with interviews as required.

The partnership with Coram's Fields expects to achieve the following outcomes:

- Income maximisation advice – 2030 individuals will report increased levels of household income
- Efficient use of Appliances advice – 2030 individuals will report a better awareness of energy efficiency measures and support
- Priority Services Register registrations- 304 individuals will report reduced levels of anxiety in fearing a utility outage and increased awareness of the PSRPSR
- Alleviate loneliness and isolation via conversations and in person events – 300 individuals will report feeling less lonely and isolated.

Associated Actions

The following actions will be implemented to deliver the project's outcomes:

- Coram's Field staff will receive training on energy efficiency to increase individual awareness of how to manage energy efficiently in the home.
- Coram's Field staff will receive training on the PSR and will help eligible households through the registration process.
- Coram's Field staff will receive training on CO awareness and general gas safety awareness.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coram’s Field staff will receive training on Services Beyond the meter, both the eligibility criteria and the process for referring those in need. • Cadent will supply Coram’s Fields with CO Alarms to distribute to the most at-risk households. <p><u>Success Criteria</u> The success of the project will be measured against meeting the below criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2030 individuals will receive advice and support on maximising income via state benefits or employment, each gaining an estimated average of £1717.11. • 2030 individuals receiving advice on the most efficient use of energy and appliances will both increase safety in their homes and reduce fuel costs. • 304 individuals who were previously unaware of their eligibility will be registered for Priority Services. They will also be made aware of other benefits including gas safety checks, locking cooker valves and translation services. • 300 individuals will be engaged either via conversations and in person events at the centre or by the outreach support worker. This will alleviate loneliness and isolation by ensuring they have a consistent trusted person/s to reach out to. The worker will also identify any additional needs including fuel poverty, benefit checks and access to the priority services register.
Project Partners and Third Parties Involved	Cadent will work principally with Corams Fields
Potential for New Learning	<p>The VCMA project with Corams Fields allows Cadent to work with a partner who has an established community identity and are trusted by parents and young people alike. Camden is an extremely diverse borough both socially and culturally. Their staff recognise the challenges faced by parents for whom English is a second language and who rely on their children to translate official documents including benefits entitlements.</p> <p>Our current VCMA projects fund established groups within a specific area where most clients are local to that community. Camden has several established communities within the area but also those who do not identify with a specific group. In addition, their facilities are also accessed by parents and carers of children attending Great Ormond Street Hospital.</p> <p>Feedback from Corams Fields will allow Cadent to understand the challenges faced by those who have increased vulnerability including mental health issues, are refugees with no recourse to public funds or have had negative experiences or perceptions of statutory services and how best to support them. It will also give Cadent an opportunity to identify if having a trusted point of contact outside of the community and having a purpose to attend i.e. nursery or youth group increases the level of</p>

	<p>enquiries and subsequent uptake in support from those who may otherwise struggle due to fear of being stigmatised. This was an issue identified during the Youth Safety Taskforce evaluation, but the evidence was limited due to the terms of reference for the evaluation.</p>
<p>Scale of VCMA Project and SROI Calculations, including NPV</p>	<p>Scale of VCMA project Cadent will invest £336,724 in partnership with Coram's Fields. The project will be delivered across a 2-year duration and forecasted to reach up to 2030 individuals.</p> <p>The project will enable individuals from the Camden Borough to access essential information and support on energy efficiency, CO safety, income maximisation, and the PSR.</p> <p><u>SROI Calculations</u> The reach will be divided as per below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2030 individuals will receive advice and support on maximising income via state benefits or employment = £3,485,733.30 • 2030 individuals will receive advice on the most efficient use of energy and appliances to increase safety and reduce fuel costs = £746,573.10 • 2030 individuals will receive advice on CO safety = £17,721.90 • 304 individuals will register for the Priority Services following conversations to identify eligibility = £43,742.56 • 300 individuals will be engaged either via conversations and in person events at the centre or by the outreach support worker. This will alleviate loneliness and isolation by ensuring they have a consistent trusted person/s to reach out to = £ <p><u>Loneliness calculation</u></p> <p>46% of 300 = 138 25% of 138 = 34.50 34.50 X£1,200 (2 years) = £41,400</p> <p>Total investment = £352,272.96 1-year gross value = £ 879,454.17 5-year gross value = £ 4,335,170.86</p> <p>1-year net value = £ 703,317.69 5-year net value = £3,982,897.90</p> <p>SROI £11.25:£1</p>
<p>VCMA Project Start and End Date</p>	<p>Start date: 01/04/2024 End date: 31/03/2026</p>
<p>Geographical Area</p>	<p>North London</p>

Internal governance and project management evidence	Description of GDN(s) review of proposal and project sign-off, with details on how the project will be managed

**Gas Network Vulnerability and Carbon Monoxide Allowance (VCMA)
Governance Document - PEA Control Table**

In order to ensure that a VCMA project is registered in accordance with the Ofgem VCMA governance document (incl. project eligibility assessment), the below table should be completed as part of the project registration process.	
Stage 1: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team PEA Peer Review	
Date Immediate Team Peer Review Completed: 02/04/24 and 11/7/2024	Review Completed By: Lucy Nembaware Amanda Jones
Stage 2: Sustainability and Social Purpose Team Management Review	
Date Management Review Completed:	Review Completed By: Phil Burrows
Step 3: Director of Sustainability & Social Purpose Sign-Off: Mark Belmega	
Director of Sustainability and Social Purpose Sign-Off Date: 22/07/24	
Step 4: Upload PEA Document to the Website & Notification Email Sent to Ofgem (vcma@ofgem.gov.uk)	
Date that PEA Document Uploaded to the Website: October 24	
Date that Notification Email Sent to Ofgem: October 24	